

NIH Partnership Council Minutes

Monday, September 17, 2001

Attendees: Tony Clifford, Howard Hochman, Walter Jones, Richard Laubach, Charles Palmer, Mike Showers, Penney Baile

Facilitator: Fern Kaufman

Old Business: Minutes of Monday, July 16, meeting reviewed. Richard stated that it was an invalid Partnership Council meeting, because no union representative was present. [Note: A review of Council history reveals that although the group previously unanimously agreed to abolish the quorum requirement of the Partnership Agreement, the group also agreed that at least one party from the union and one party from management would be required for a Council meeting to be held. Since the speaker for the July meeting was on the topic of A-76 and the FAIR Act Inventory, the members present wanted to proceed with the meeting. The minutes of the July 16 meeting have been distributed to all Partnership Council members and will be considered for information only and not official minutes of a Council meeting.]

New Business: Future of the Partnership Council

Since the Council is operating under an expired Partnership Agreement, the floor was opened to discussion of whether we continue, make modifications, or discontinue.

Richard noted that partnership was locked in at the local level in his organization, via Contract. He also noted that the NIH Police have a local partnership effort. He said we've had some successes and some difficulties at the NIH partnership level. He said he thought it could be beneficial to continue, but it was our call.

Walt said he believed there was a benefit to local partnerships, because it was more meaningful to address issues at the front line level. He noted that about 80% of the issues discussed at the NIH Partnership Council meetings related to ORS specifically. He said he didn't know if we needed to continue at the NIH level if it wasn't mandated, but that if we were moving ahead on A-76 types of issues there could be a benefit to an NIH approach.

Tony said he had the continuing concern that the Council only represented a minority of NIH employees. He said the only thing we have in common across the board now is A-76.

Fern asked the group to recall what issues we dealt with that were NIH-wide. Campus parking concerns and resolutions (Richard noted that we should have a follow-up review on whether we have achieved cost-savings), and awards equity were referenced. Tony said that other than these issues, historically what we have talked about have been issues of concern between AFGE and ORS.

These options for the Council's future were raised: meet quarterly, meet as needed, or continue as is for the next six months and reevaluate.

Richard weighed in that in light of the recent tragedy there may be more of a need for us to meet, on the topic of security, for example.

The group agreed to continue on the current schedule of meetings for the next six months, but that if no agenda items were submitted prior to a meeting it would be cancelled. Requests for agenda items will be made about two weeks in advance of each meeting. The group agreed to reevaluate the Council's operation at the end of this six-month period.

When the lack of representation from other unions was discussed, Richard said that Mildred Clark did not get notice of the meetings. Charlie noted that Mildred was sent e-mail notices about the meetings the same as the rest of the group. Richard said that Mildred did not receive the e-mails at times because she didn't have full access to a PC or her management intercepted the message and didn't pass it on. Penney said this was the first time it had been brought to her attention that Mildred had difficulty of receiving meeting notices, and she committed to ensuring that Mildred received notice of meetings. [Note: after the meeting, Penney both sent an e-mail and left a phone message for Mildred.]

Next meeting: Monday, October 15, 1:30 p.m., Building 31, Conference Room B3C36